

cal teaching in the Massachusetts Homoeopathic Hospital and allied institutions.

The spirit of the times is to do away with sectarianism in things scientific. In accord with this spirit, this school in 1918 announces that its curriculum has been made as broad and inclusive as is consistent with the medical science of the day.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ANAESTHETICS.

Rockefeller Institute, 1st October, 1918.

To the Editor :

A gradually increasing misconception of the Art of Anaesthesia has led to a rather unique condition of affairs.

We find that nurses and other lay persons may, by the simple acquisition of a few rules, become anaesthetists. Large institutions have adopted the nurse anaesthetist upon grounds of economy, expediency and even sentimentality. It is argued that these workers can be employed at little expense, that the supply meets the demand and that the feminine element eliminates fear and works for smoothness during the induction of the anaesthesia.

These institutions may employ lay persons to take their X-ray pictures and to make urinary, blood or sputum examinations, but does any one dream of speaking of these workers as the hospital Roentologist or the attending Pathologist? They are employed as technicians. The nurse who administers an anaesthetic is an anaesthetic technician. She can never be more without a medical degree, for in order to understand the language of anaesthesia, one must have intimate acquaintance with anatomy, physiology, medicine, surgery, diagnosis, psychology and special branches.

The nurse who, in discussion with a medical man, attempts to defend a theory relating to anaesthesia, cannot fail to feel the presumption of it and, if graced with wit, to see the absurdity of such a position. Yet it has actually come to pass that medical men have suffered themselves to be instructed by a nurse in the theory and practice of anaesthesia.

In justice to an important branch of surgery, and to our medical confreres who devote their training and their energy to its development, let us drop the term Anaesthetist, as applied to its non-medical workers, and adopt the term Anaesthetic Technician.

PALUEL J. FLAGG.